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Amendments to the Specification:

Please add the following two new paragraphs after the paragraph (paragraph 34) ending at page 14, line 14:

As is shown in Figure 2, an input signal Vin 240 is applied to one input of amplifier 340 (350). The second input to amplifier 340 (350) is a feedback signal that is produced from the output of the emitter of transistor 365 (375) of a first stage of the variable gain amplifier. Similarly, outputs from other corresponding emitters in the other stages can as well be coupled to the second input of amplifier 340 (350) as is shown in the inset detail associated with the respective stages shown in Figure 2.

As can be seen in Figure 2, the output of amplifier 340 produces a signal (i.e., an intermediate signal), that is provided as an input to the base of transistor 365 (375) (and similarly to the bases of transistors in other stages as shown in the inset). The gain stage 310 has a variable offset, as described above, whose effect is decreased by the use of the amplifier 340 (350). Accordingly, the gain stage 310 as configured can be referred to as a variable offset circuit. The gain stage 310 includes transistors 365 (375) that receive the signal produced by the amplifier 340 (350) (the intermediate signal) and produce a feedback signal that is provided as an input to amplifier 340 (350).